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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/485,002	01/31/2000	KOJI NAKATA	1776-4054	1376

7590 12/12/2002

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EXAMINER

CHEN, VIVIAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1773

DATE MAILED: 12/12/2002

15

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/485,002

Applicant(s)

NAKATA ET AL

Examiner

Vivian Chen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 September 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 30-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 30-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-29, 35-67 have been cancelled by Applicant.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, in paragraph 4 of the previous Office Action has been withdrawn in view of Applicant's amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. Claims 30-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WNUK ET AL (US 5,391,423).

WNUK ET AL discloses a biodegradable laminate comprising a polycaprolactone core layer surrounded by outer layers of other biodegradable resins such as cellulose esters, polyglycolic acid copolyesters, and/or aliphatic polyester such as polyethylene succinate (lines 30, col. 9 to line 13, col. 10; lines 14-30, col. 12; column 14; line 54, col. 16 to line 12, col. 17) as recited in claims 30-32 wherein the film layers are coextrudable (lines 40-50, col. 22) as recited in claim 33.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize the laminate disclosed in WNUK ET AL in known applications where a combination of barrier and/or mechanical properties and biodegradability is deemed desirable, such as in agricultural applications as indicated in claim 35. Since it is well known in the art to select the materials used in the various outer and core layers of a laminate to improve

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the overall mechanical properties of the laminate as a whole and to compensate for the material-specific weaknesses of individual layers, the Examiner has reason to believe that the laminates disclosed in WNUK ET AL are capable of possessing tear strengths superior to those of single material films of comparable thickness as recited in claim 34, therefore the Examiner has basis for shifting the burden of proof to applicant as in *In re Fitzgerald et al.*, 205 USPQ 594.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 9/25/2002 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

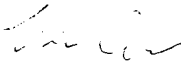
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6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vivian Chen whose telephone number is (703) 305-3551. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 6 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Thibodeau, can be reached on (703) 308-2367. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9310 (for non-after finals) and (703) 872-9311 (for after-finals).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

December 9, 2002


Vivian Chen
Primary Examiner
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